



# St. John's Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



## *Beginning of Jesus' Ministry*

*January 11, 2026 10:30 Service of the Word*

Last week we read about Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist in the Jordan River. We continue the story this week and discover Jesus has been driven into a wilderness to be tested by evil. It is a full and true test. Will Jesus obey the will of the Father or will he decide to go with the ways of the world? We know the end of the story. Jesus wins! He then goes on to call his first disciples and he begins his work. However he doesn't work where we'd expect. That place would be Jerusalem. No, instead he makes Capernaum his home base, a small obscure community on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee.

*Welcome to worship today!*

If you are a visitor we invite you to sign the guest book in the back of the sanctuary.

Large print bulletins are available on the usher's stand.

The Zoom feed for this service is available in the nursery.

† GATHERING †

Prelude and Announcements

Apostles' Greeting

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C: And also with you.**

Confession and Forgiveness

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, one God,  
the Creator of heaven and earth,  
the Word who spoke life into being,  
the Wind stirring the waters.

**C: Amen.**

P: Let us turn in confession to the one who knows us completely.

*Silence for reflection and self-examination*

P: Mighty God, lover of justice,

**C: you call us to life in community,  
but we have served our own interests  
at the expense of our neighbors.**

**We have sown deceit where honesty was needed.**

**We say the right words,  
but our hearts are far from you.**

**Turn us to seek your face.**

**Knit us together and give us the mind of Christ,  
that we may do justice, love mercy,  
and walk humbly with you, our God.**

**Amen.**

P: The former things have passed away,  
and new things God now declares:

Like a spring of water that never fails,  
God covers you in the righteousness of Christ,  
and forgives your sin in Jesus' name.

May the Spirit give you strength to live for others,  
and bless you with the gift of peace.

**C: Amen.**

*Gathering Hymn* Gather Us In

*(For music turn to Hymn 532 in the Red Hymnal)*

1. **Here in this place new light is streaming,  
now is the darkness vanished away;  
see in this space our fears and our dreamings  
brought here to you in the light of this day.  
Gather us in, the lost and forsaken,  
gather us in, the blind and the lame;  
call to us now, and we shall awaken,  
we shall arise at the sound of our name.**
  
2. **We are the young, our lives are a myst'ry,  
we are the old who yearn for your face;  
we have been sung throughout all of hist'ry,  
called to be light to the whole human race.  
Gather us in, the rich and the haughty,  
gather us in, the proud and the strong;  
give us a heart, so meek and so lowly,  
give us the courage to enter the song.**
  
3. **Here we will take the wine and the water,  
here we will take the bread of new birth,  
here you shall call your sons and your daughters,  
call us anew to be salt for the earth.  
Give us to drink the wine of compassion,  
give us to eat the bread that is you;  
nourish us well, and teach us to fashion  
lives that are holy and hearts that are true.**
  
4. **Not in the dark of buildings confining,  
not in some heaven, light years away—  
here in this place the new light is shining,  
now is the kingdom, and now is the day.  
Gather us in and hold us forever,  
gather us in and make us your own;  
gather us in, all peoples together,  
fire of love in our flesh and our bone.**

Gathering Dialog (John 1)

A: In the beginning was the Word,

**C: and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.**

A: In the Word was life,

**C: and the life was the light of all people.**

P: The Word became flesh and lived among us,

**C: and we have seen his glory, full of grace and truth.**

Prayer of the Day

A: Let us pray...

Lord God, our strength, the struggle between good and evil rages within and around us, and the devil and all the forces that defy you tempt us with empty promises. Keep us steadfast in your word, and when we fall, raise us again and restore us through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

† WORD †

First Reading Exodus 24:9-18

B: <sup>9</sup>Then Moses and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel went up, <sup>10</sup>and they saw the God of Israel. Under his feet there was something like a pavement of sapphire stone, like the very heaven for clearness. <sup>11</sup>God did not lay his hand on the chief men of the people of Israel; also they beheld God, and they ate and drank.

<sup>12</sup>The LORD said to Moses, "Come up to me on the mountain, and wait there; and I will give you the tablets of stone, with the law and the commandment, which I have written for their instruction." <sup>13</sup>So Moses set out with his assistant Joshua, and Moses went up into the mountain of God. <sup>14</sup>To the elders he had said, "Wait here for us, until we come to you again; for Aaron and Hur are with you; whoever has a dispute may go to them." <sup>15</sup>Then Moses went up on the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain. <sup>16</sup>The glory of the LORD settled on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days; on the seventh day he called to Moses out of the cloud. <sup>17</sup>Now the appearance of the glory of the LORD was like a

devouring fire on the top of the mountain in the sight of the people of Israel. <sup>18</sup>Moses entered the cloud, and went up on the mountain. Moses was on the mountain for forty days and forty nights.

*After the reading the reader may say:* The Word of the Lord

**C: Thanks be to God.**

Scripture Poetry Psalm 91 *(read responsively)*

D: All you sheltered by the Most High,  
who live in Almighty God's shadow,

**C: say to the Lord, "My refuge, my fortress,  
my God in whom I trust!"**

D: God will free you from hunters' snares,  
will save you from deadly plague,

**C: will cover you like a nesting bird.  
God's wings will shelter you.**

D: No nighttime terror shall you fear,  
no arrows shot by day,

**C: no plague that prowls the dark,  
no wasting scourge at noon.**

D: A thousand may fall at your side,  
ten thousand at your right hand.

**C: But you shall live unharmed:  
God is sturdy armor.**

D: You have only to open your eyes  
to see how the wicked are repaid.

**C: You have the Lord as refuge,  
have made the Most High your stronghold.**

D: No evil shall ever touch you,  
no harm come near your home.

**C: God instructs angels  
to guard you wherever you go.**

D: With their hands they support you,  
so your foot will not strike a stone.

**C: You will tread on lion and viper,  
trample tawny lion and dragon.**

D: "I deliver all who cling to me,  
raise the ones who know my name,  
answer those who call me,  
stand with those in trouble.

**C: These I rescue and honor,  
satisfy with long life,  
and show my power to save.”**

*Gospel Acclamation (Matthew 4:16)*

**C: Alleluia. The people who lived in darkness have seen a great light. Alleluia.**

*Gospel Reading* Matthew 4

*The gospel is announced:*

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter.

**C: Glory to you O Lord.**

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. <sup>2</sup>He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. <sup>3</sup>The tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.” <sup>4</sup>But he answered, “It is written,

‘One does not live by bread alone,  
but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”

<sup>5</sup>Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, <sup>6</sup>saying to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written,

‘He will command his angels concerning you,’  
and ‘On their hands they will bear you up,  
so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.’”

<sup>7</sup>Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”

<sup>8</sup>Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor; <sup>9</sup>and he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” <sup>10</sup>Jesus said to him, “Away with you, Satan! for it is written,

‘Worship the Lord your God,  
and serve only him.’”

<sup>11</sup>Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

<sup>12</sup>Now when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. <sup>13</sup>He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, <sup>14</sup>so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled:

<sup>15</sup>“Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali,  
on the road by the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—  
<sup>16</sup>the people who sat in darkness  
have seen a great light,

and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death  
light has dawned.”

<sup>17</sup>From that time Jesus began to proclaim, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”

<sup>18</sup>As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. <sup>19</sup>And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fish for people.” <sup>20</sup>Immediately they left their nets and followed him. <sup>21</sup>As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. <sup>22</sup>Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed him.

<sup>23</sup>Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people. <sup>24</sup>So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought to him all the sick, those who were afflicted with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, and paralytics, and he cured them. <sup>25</sup>And great crowds followed him from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and from beyond the Jordan.

*After the reading:*

P: The gospel of the Lord

C: Praise to you O Christ.

### Children's Sermon

#### Sermon

Hymn of the Day Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness  
(For music see Hymn 843 in the Red Hymnal)

- 1. Praise the One who breaks the darkness  
with a liberating light;  
praise the One who frees the pris'ners,  
turning blindness into sight.  
Praise the One who preached the gospel,  
healing ev'ry dread disease,  
calming storms and feeding thousands  
with the very bread of peace.**
- 2. Praise the One who blessed the children  
with a strong yet gentle word;  
praise the One who drove out demons**

with a piercing, two-edged sword.  
Praise the One who brings cool water  
to the desert's burning sand;  
from the well comes living water  
quenching thirst in ev'ry land.

3. Praise the one true love incarnate:  
Christ, who suffered in our place;  
Jesus died and rose for many  
that we may know God by grace.  
Let us sing for joy and gladness,  
seeing what our God has done.  
Praise the one redeeming glory;  
praise the One who makes us one.

Text: Rusty Edwards, b. 1955. Text copyright 1987 Hope Publishing Company. Music: J. Wyeth, *Repository of Sacred Music*, Part II, 1813

## † INCORPORATION OF NEW MEMBERS †

*Affirmation of Baptism service, Page 234 in the front of the Red Hymnal*  
Daniel and Carla Barnes, and Cythia Clinton & Rev. Allyn Itterly  
become members of St. John's.

### Peace

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C: And also with you.**

P: Let us share that peace with one another.

*The congregation may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace.*

## † THANKSGIVING †

### Gathering of Prayers and Offerings

*You are invited to write a prayer concern on the small blank slip of paper in your worship bulletin. This slip will be collected by the ushers in the offering plates. The concerns raised will be prayed for later in the service.*

### Offertory

*Hymn of Thanksgiving* As the offering is brought forward:

Lord Let My Heart Be Good Soil

*For music turn to Hymn 713 in the Blue Hymnal*

**Lord, let my heart be good soil,**

**open to the seed of your Word.**

**Lord, let my heart be good soil,**

**where love can grow and peace is understood.**

**When my heart is hard, break the stone away.**

**When my heart is cold, warm it with the day.**

**When my heart is lost, lead me on your way.**

**Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart,**

**Lord, let my heart be good soil.**

Text and music: Handt Hanson, b. 1950, Copyright 1985 Prince of Peace Publishing/Changing Church, Inc.

*Offering Prayer*

P: Let us pray: Merciful God,

**C: in the mystery of the Word made flesh, you embrace our lives with your great love for humanity. With joy and gladness we ask that**

**these gifts may be for many a sign of that love, and that we may**

**continue to share in your divine life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

**Amen.**

*Prayers of Intercession*

P: With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

*Issues raised by the congregation are prayed for.*

*The prayer concludes:*

P: Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

**C: Amen.**

*Lord's Prayer*

P: Lord remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**C: Our Father, who art in heaven,**

**hallowed be thy name,**

**thy kingdom come,**

**thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread;**

**and forgive us our trespasses,**

**as we forgive those who trespass against us;**

**and lead us not into temptation,**

**but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen.**

†    SENDING    †

*Blessing*

P: The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make his face shine upon you  
and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look upon you with favor  
and give you peace.

**C: Amen.**

*Sending Hymn* Sent Forth by God's Blessing  
(For music see Hymn 547 in the Red Hymnal)

- 1. Sent forth by God's blessing,  
our true faith confessing,  
the people of God from this dwelling take leave.  
The supper is ended,  
Oh, now be extended  
the fruits of this service in all who believe.  
The seed of Christ's teaching,  
receptive souls reaching,  
shall blossom in action for God and for all.  
Your grace shall incite us,  
your love shall unite us  
to work for your kingdom  
and answer your call.**
  
- 2. With praise and thanksgiving  
to God ever-living,  
the tasks of our ev'ry day life we will face –  
our faith ever sharing,  
in love ever caring,  
embracing God's children, the whole human race.  
With your feast you feed us,  
with your light now lead us;  
unite us as one in this life that we share.  
Then may all the living**

**with praise and thanksgiving  
give honor to Christ  
and his name that we bear.**

Text: Omer Westendorf, 1916-1997, alt. Text copyright 1964 World Library Publications Music: Welsh folk tune

*Dismissal*

**P: Go in peace. Serve the Lord!**

**C: God's work. Our hands.**

Terrible cruise, rained the whole time.  
They did have a great buffet.  
I had two of everything



**Worship assistants TODAY:**

Greeters and Ushers     Bruce and Connie Stevenson  
Acolyte                     Charlotte Stroup  
Counters                    Michele Myers and Anne Stromstad  
Coffee Hour

**Worship assistants for next Sunday, January 18**

Greeters and Ushers     John and Linda Thompson  
Acolyte                     Elijah Young  
Altar Care                 Linda Flood  
Communion Assistants   Mary Zuege  
Counters                    Greg and Mary Zuege  
Coffee Hour                Sandwiches – Annual Congregational Meeting

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